

Michigan Child Care Matters

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER & INDUSTRY SERVICES
Bureau of Family Services
Division of Training & Consultation



SUMMER FUN!

Issue 64, Summer 2003

From the Director

Summertime is here. Caregivers and children are spending more time outdoors again. Your outdoor activities are limited only by your imagination. You can bring the sand and water tables outside for the children. Using sidewalks and parking lots as easels, and sidewalk chalk as the medium, children can draw magnificent murals. Playing with balls and riding bikes are always popular outdoor activities. Playgrounds and playground equipment may be used on a daily basis.

This is a good time to review some playground safety issues.

Improper surfacing on playgrounds leads to many accidents every year. The surface under and around the playground equipment must have enough cushioning, or give, to protect children when they fall to the ground. Sand, pea gravel, wood chips and mulch, and chopped tires are examples of acceptable surfacing materials. Hard-packed dirt, grass, and asphalt are not acceptable surfaces. Falling less than 12 inches onto concrete, or two feet onto hard-packed dirt and grass can produce enough of a shock to cause a concussion!

Fall zones are the areas under and around playground equipment that must have a protective surface. While there are specific guidelines for each individual piece of playground equipment, the fall zone should extend a minimum of six feet around the equipment.

Equipment and activities that are not age appropriate are dangerous for both younger and older children. Playgrounds, by their very nature, encourage risk taking by children; they also challenge children to improve their gross motor skills. When older children play on equipment designed for toddlers or preschoolers, they may misuse the equipment to create more age-appropriate challenges and risks. Young children may not have sufficiently developed skills to play safely on larger school-age

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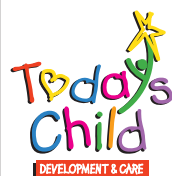
equipment.

Playground equipment gets lots of use by children every day. Lack of maintenance should never be an excuse for an injury to a child. Each caregiver must be expected to report any problems with equipment to the program director or maintenance person at once. Equipment requiring maintenance should be off limits to children until the problem is corrected.

Lack of supervision by caregivers on the playground is easy to correct. When children are playing outside, caregivers should be interacting with them – not socializing with other caregivers.

Let's make safety on playgrounds a priority. Let's

do everything we can to provide children with a safe



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How Does Your Playground Grow?

Judy Gaspar, Licensing Consultant
Kalamazoo Office

Very safely, if it is in Michigan. All centers must meet Administrative Rule R400.5117(5) in the following situations:

- ◆ Child care centers with an original effective date after December 9, 2000;
- ◆ Newly installed playgrounds;
- ◆ Newly installed equipment on existing playgrounds.

The Playground Equipment Safety Act, No. 16 of the Public Acts of 1997, is the standard that must be met. This law uses the following standards for enforcement:

- ◆ "Handbook for Public Playground Safety," published for the Consumer Products Safety Commission (CPSC), and
- ◆ "Standard Consumer Safety Performance Specification for Playground Equipment for Public Use, ASTM F1487-93," published by the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM).

The "Handbook for Public Playground Safety" is available from the Licensing Division, Training and Consultation Unit or on the web site of Consumer Products Safety Commission, which is: www.cpsc.gov. Search for playground and then scroll down to Publication No. 325.

A center can hire a certified Playground Safety Inspector (PSI) to plan a new playground or to inspect a new or existing playground. These Playground Safety Inspectors are available through two principal avenues:

1. Playground equipment sales companies
2. Freelance Playground Safety Inspectors available on a for-fee basis

The PSI can give a center a written report as to compliance with the CPSC recommendations and the ASTM code. Compliance with these codes meets compliance with Rule R400.5117(5). The code requirements cover these areas:

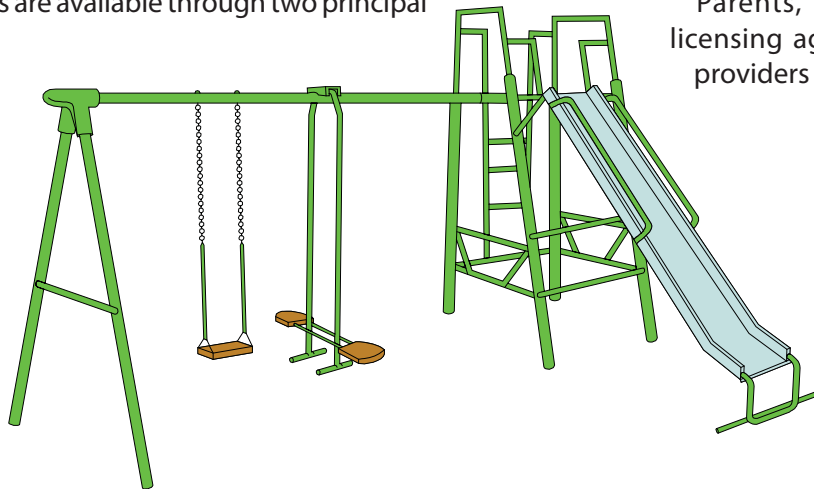
- ◆ Surfacing and fall heights
- ◆ Use zones for equipment
- ◆ Layout and design of playgrounds
- ◆ Installation and maintenance of equipment
- ◆ Materials used for manufacturing and construction
- ◆ General hazards
- ◆ Stairways, ladders, and handrails
- ◆ Platforms, guardrails and protective barriers
- ◆ Major types of play equipment

When purchasing new playground equipment, look for documentation by one or more of the following: CPSC, ASTM or International Play Equipment Manufacturers Association (IPEMA).

Note that "membership" in IPEMA does not mean that the manufacturer met the standards of IPEMA.

Appendix A in the CPSC handbook is a playground maintenance checklist to be used when inspecting playgrounds that require compliance with the Playground Safety Act, Public Act 16, 1997.

Parents, insurance companies, licensing agencies, and child care providers must work together to



Outdoor Playgrounds

Judy Gaspar, Licensing Consultant
Kalamazoo County

What if:

- ◆ My playground equipment is old?
- ◆ My playground equipment was moved from another place?
- ◆ All my equipment is school-age size and my children are preschoolers?
- ◆ All my playground equipment was built by volunteers?
- ◆ My slide is too high?

Let's look at the requirements for child care centers. Administrative Rule R400.5117 (4) states: "Outdoor play and activity areas shall be maintained in a safe manner." "Safe manner" in this context means:

- ◆ Safe surfacing
- ◆ Absence of general hazards
- ◆ Ongoing maintenance of equipment
- ◆ Age appropriate size

Tour your playground and assess each piece of equipment on these criteria:

- ◆ Is the surface adequate to prevent an injury if a fall?
- ◆ Are there any sharp points, corners, or edge
- ◆ Are there any protrusions, such as bolt heads
- ◆ Are there any entrapment areas where a child's head or arm or leg or finger could get caught
- ◆ Is the equipment free of rust, rot, cracks, splinters? Are there any missing pieces? Are S-hooks on the swings closed tightly?
- ◆ Is this piece of equipment appropriately sized for our infants, our toddlers, our preschoolers, or our school-age children?

Ways to meet the requirements include:

- ◆ Making unsafe equipment off-limits to child care children
- ◆ Repairing any useable equipment
- ◆ Replacing equipment with equipment that meets current Consumer Product Safety Commission standards.

You might consider hiring a Playground Safety Inspector to assess your playground in its current condition and have the Inspector assist you in a long-range plan of upgrading your playground.

Ask the Inspector for a Playground Safety Audit. The audit will evaluate the current condition of each piece of the playground, the priority in getting it fixed or replaced, and the Inspector's recommendations regarding retrofitting, discarding, or replacing current equipment. In addition, a Playground Safety Audit can alert you to hazardous equipment that should be removed immediately.

Safe equipment and surfacing will result in fewer accidents and injuries to the children in your care. Parents will be pleased that you value safety outdoors as well as indoors. Children will be delighted with each new improvement that you make. ❖



School's Out for the Summer!

Jackie Sharkey, Licensing Consultant
Macomb County

Planning a summer program for school-age children is both challenging and fun. After a long school year, the children's summer days should include the following:

- ◆ Time for relaxing with quiet activities such as group story, listening to audiotapes and individual reading
- ◆ Time to expend high energy with outdoor experiences throughout the day and/or active indoor games
- ◆ A variety of activity choices
- ◆ Opportunities to do self-directed activities

All of these can be accomplished using themes. Themes are broad categories that help adults and children think of creative ideas and activities for their programs.



Summer for School – Agers

June 9 – 13: Feeling Special

Children can find their own ways to let others learn about them. They may write an autobiography, a play or book of poetry; keep a journal; make a family tree; publish a children's newspaper; make a time capsule; find a pen pal, make their own stationery, etc.

June 16 – 20: Environmentally Yours

How can we make the earth a better place for all of us? Make a home/center recycling center, plant and nurture a garden, make a terrarium, design a model city out of toys and items around the home/center (i.e. milk carton skyscrapers, shoebox houses, etc.)

June 23 – 27: Games, Games and More Games

The children can play some favorite games and create new ones too! Make it a week of indoor and outdoor games such as Uno, Checkers, Chess, Sorry, Scrabble, Old Maid, Othello, Trouble, Monopoly, Clue, Battleship, Treasure Hunt with written clues, Memory, Pictionary, Candyland, Connect Four, 4 Square, Hopscotch. Children can bring in games from home or make up their own.



June 30 – July 4: Celebrate Freedom!

Get ready for a birthday party! This can be a very creative week including making decorations and

putting them up in the room (fireworks painting, streamers, etc.), baking a flag cake, organizing games and dressing in red, white and blue.

July 7 – 11: Our Olympic Games

The kids can choose the contests and the prizes too. Obstacle courses, relay races, sports activities (table tennis, basketball, soccer, bowling, ring toss) to name just a few.

July 14 – 18: Camp – Out

Gather up your camping gear and head for the backyard or playground. Plan camping food, set up tents, gather needed materials, go bug hunting, sing camp songs, and tell stories.

July 21 – 25: When I Grow Up

Children visualize being grown-ups all of the time. Give each child a grown up responsibility, let them explore career choices, and let them be leaders for the week.



July 28 – Aug. 1: Hot Weather Fun

Cool down with cool ideas. Make a water slide, bubbles, a sunhat, or even your own ice cream.

Aug. 4 – 8: Luau

Let's take a trip to Hawaii! Introduce new tropical fruits each day (try whole coconut, pineapple, papaya, star fruit, kiwi, guava); decorate with kid made tropical decorations; cook Hawaiian pizza.

Aug. 11 – 15: Creative Expressions

Bring out the unique talents of all the children. Have a comic strip contest, do cake decorating, have a magic show, or an art show. Explore a variety of artistic styles and mediums including paint, sculpture, photography, writing, music, architecture, science, dance, singing, homemade instruments and jewelry making.

Aug. 18 – 22: Carnival

Say good-bye to summer vacation with a child directed carnival. The children create everything such as organizing a bicycle rodeo, striking up a band, crafting costumes, making popcorn or cotton candy and setting up silly games.

ALLOW THE CHILDREN TO BE AS CREATIVE AS POSSIBLE AND ENJOY! ♦

Field Trips For Children

Ann Hill, Licensing Consultant
Ingham County

Field trips can be an exciting and educational benefit for children by offering a variety of hands on experiences such as different sights, sounds, tastes and textures. A field trip should be planned, age appropriate, well supervised and evaluated. Before a field trip is planned, the children need to feel comfortable and secure with the day care home/center environment and their caregiver/staff person.

Guidelines For Field Trips

1. Plan carefully.
 - ◆ Remember the interests, ages, needs and expectations of the group of children when choosing a location.
 - ◆ Contact and visit the field trip site before you take the children.
2. Prepare the children before leaving on the trip.
 - ◆ Discuss where you are going, what you will be doing and the behavior you will expect.
3. Timing of the field trip.
 - ◆ Keep initial field trips short so children do not become overly tired or lose interest.
 - ◆ Consider taking trips mid-week so you have a day to prepare and a day to follow-up.
 - ◆ Find out the busy times of the day and do not visit during those times.
 - ◆ Avoid field trips near a holiday. Children may be overly stimulated and tired during this time.
4. Safety Precautions.
 - ◆ Devise some type of identification system that helps to identify your group of children such as bright colored t-shirts, logo caps or tags.
 - ◆ Do not use children's names for security reasons.
5. Prepare all adults going on the field trip.
 - ◆ All caregivers and volunteers should be aware of their responsibilities and the emergency procedures.
 - ◆ Assign each adult to a specific small group of children.
 - ◆ Be sure to take a copy of the child information cards and the attendance list.
 - ◆ Take attendance before leaving and before returning from the field trip.
6. Notify parents of the field trip.
 - ◆ Keep written permission from parents on file



- at the center for field trips.
- ◆ Inform parents of the reasons for the field trip and suggest ways to extend the experience at home.
- ◆ Inform parents of any items their child may need, such as; special clothes, a sack lunch, money for admission fees or other costs.
7. Create a trip bag.
 - ◆ Assemble together supplies in a handy bag or backpack, including a first aid kit, tissue, wet wipes and extra clothes.
8. Follow-up activities.
 - ◆ Record children's experiences by drawing pictures, dictating observations or voice recordings.
 - ◆ Build memories by making a photo album of the field trip.
 - ◆ Write a class thank you note to the field trip host. Allow children to dictate their own message and participate in decorating the card or note.
9. Evaluate the field trip.
 - ◆ Were the goals and objectives met?
 - ◆ Was the field trip age appropriate?
 - ◆ What were the strong and weak points?
 - ◆ What would I do differently the next time?
 - ◆ Keep this information for future use.

Child Friendly Destinations

The following is a list of field trips to consider:

- ◆ Your neighborhood: library, post office, construction site, fire station, grocery store, ecology walk to pick up litter.
- ◆ Nature center, greenhouse, florist, garden, planetarium, Christmas tree farm.
- ◆ Cider mill, city market, pumpkin patch, blueberry picking farm.
- ◆ Zoo, animal farm, pet shop, aquarium, bird sanctuary, fish hatchery.
- ◆ Radio station, television station, newspaper company.
- ◆ Museum, historical sites, art gallery, children's theater or concert.
- ◆ Bookstore, library, music store.
- ◆ Parks and playgrounds.
- ◆ Ride an elevator, escalator or bus. Visit a train station or airport.

Safe Meals for Summer Outings

Aliene Mills
Extension Home Economist
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it cold longer.

What are the keys to packing a safe outing meal? Bacteria can cause food poisoning. All they need to grow is the right combination of time, temperature and moisture.

Food-borne illness can cause diarrhea, vomiting, stomach cramps, and other unpleasant symptoms which can last for several hours or even days.

- ◆ Be particularly careful when preparing the food. Always use clean hands, utensils and work area. Wash hands, utensils and cutting surfaces after they've been used with raw meats, fish and poultry to avoid cross contamination. Sanitize your cutting board by scrubbing with chlorine cleanser or a solution of 1 tablespoon chlorine bleach in 1 gallon of water.
- ◆ Keep hot foods hot in insulated containers – 140° F or hotter.
- ◆ Keep cold foods cold - 40° F or colder. Include a frozen drink, reusable ice pack or ice frozen in a plastic container.
- ◆ If you don't have an insulated lunch box, use a metal one instead of a bag for better insulation. Some have a special plastic container that may be filled with water and frozen.
- ◆ Select foods with care. Foods that will stay safe without refrigeration include:
peanut butter and jam or jelly
nuts
hard cheeses
crackers
canned foods (in the can)
fresh fruits and vegetables
dried foods
bread
cookies, cakes, fruit pies
hard-cooked eggs in the shell
marinated vegetable salads
- ◆ Freeze a sandwich or use frozen bread to keep



Don't:

- ◆ Pack perishable items without taking special precautions.
- ◆ Leave the meal in a hot spot like the sun or in a parked car.
- ◆ Save food with perishable ingredients from one day to the next.
- ◆ Let perishable foods stand at room temperature for more than two hours.

Remember:

- ◆ Sneezes, coughs, infected cuts or sores, pets, your mouth, hands and hair all contain bacteria. Keep them out of food to help

Applesauce

For each 1 quart of peeled and sliced apples, add:

1 cup Water	1/2 t. Cinnamon
1/2 cup Sugar	Dash of Salt
1 t. Lemon juice	

Cook until tender. Mash the apples. Add more sugar if desired.

Christopher Columbus Ships

Apples or Bananas
Marshmallows
Toothpicks

If using apples, cut into wedges. If using bananas, cut into fourths. Use the fruit for the boat. Use the marshmallow and toothpick to form the flags. Stick a marshmallow on the end of a toothpick and stick two or three into

Summer Reading Tips for Parents

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www.education-world.com

Summer shouldn't mean taking a break from learning, especially reading. Studies show that most students experience a loss of reading skills over the summer months, but children who continue to read actually gain skills. Efforts should be made during the summer to help children sustain reading skills, practice reading and read for enjoyment.

Reading builds visualization, thinking and language abilities. Taking the time to read with your child can help you evaluate your child's reading skills.

If you discover that your child is having trouble with reading, he or she may have a learning disability. 80% of children with a learning disability have difficulty with basic reading and language. But early identification of such a disability gives a child the chance to develop ways to learn how to read effectively, and skills to lead a successful and productive life.

A recent National Institutes of Health study showed that 67 percent of young students at risk for reading difficulties became average or above average readers after receiving help in the early grades.

Parents should remember that children need free time in the summer to relax and enjoy the pleasures of childhood. So summer reading should be fun. Following are a few tips to make reading enjoyable for your children this summer:

Read aloud together with your child every day. Make it fun by reading outdoors on the front steps, patio, at the beach or park. Also, let your children read to you. For younger children, point out the relation-

ship between words and sounds.

Set a good example! Parents must be willing to model behavior for their children. Keep lots of reading material around the house. Turn off the TV and have each person read his or her book, including mom and dad. Read the same book your child is reading and discuss it. This is the way to develop habits of the mind and build capacity for thought and insight.

Let kids choose what they want to read, and don't turn your nose up at popular fiction. It will only discourage the reading habit. Buy books on tape, especially for a child with a learning disability. Listen to them in the car, or turn off the TV and have the family listen to them together.

Take your children to the library regularly. Most libraries sponsor summer reading clubs with easy-to-reach goals for preschool and school-age children. Check the library calendar for special summer reading activities and events. Libraries also provide age appropriate lists for summer reading.

Subscribe, in your child's name, to magazines like *Sports Illustrated for Kids*, *Highlights for Children*, or *National Geographic World*. Encourage older children to read the newspaper and current events magazines, to keep up the reading habit over the summer and develop vocabulary. Ask them what they think about what they've read, and listen to what they say.

Ease disappointment over summer separation from a favorite school friend by encouraging them to become pen pals. Present both children with postcards or envelopes that are already addressed and stamped. If both children have access to the Internet, email is another option.

Make trips a way to encourage reading by reading aloud traffic signs, billboards, notices. Show your children how to read a map, and once you are on the road, let them take turns being the navigator. Encourage children to keep a summer scrapbook. Tape in souvenirs of your family's summer activities, picture postcards, ticket stubs, photos. Have your children



Water Hazards/Water Activities in Family and Group Day Care Homes

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Reprinted from Issue 53

As we approach the summer months, it's always a good idea to review with home day care providers the department's policy regarding water hazards and water activities. First of all, a water hazard is defined as any area where water accumulates to a level in which a child can drown. And let's all remember, a child can drown in as little as 2 or 3 inches of water in less time than it takes to answer a phone call.

Some examples of water hazards include: all swimming and wading pools, ponds, streams, lakes, canals, ditches, drains, rivers, uncovered wells, hot tubs or spas. Even toilets, bathtubs and buckets of water can be a hazard to young children without diligent supervision from you.

Let's answer some of your frequently asked questions about water hazards and water activities.



Q: I live near a lake. Do I need a fence?

A: If the children's play area is within 200 feet of the water hazard, yes, some type of barrier will be required. Your best solution may be to fence in your play area with fencing at least 4 feet high and a gate that can be locked. As each situation is different, we recommend you check with your licensing consultant.

Q: I have an above ground pool. Can I count the walls of the pool to act as the barrier?

A: Maybe. If the walls of the pool are at least 4 feet high at every point around the pool at ground level, yes, you would be able to count the wall itself as a barrier. But remember, you must also remove or make inaccessible the steps or stairs leading up to the pool so children cannot access the water that way. Also, if the pump mechanism or other yard equipment could provide a means for children to climb into the pool, those would have to be protected, too.

Q: What type of barrier do I need for my hot tub?

A: First of all, heated hot tubs/spas are prohibited for use by day care children, and use of jets in unheated hot tubs/spas is also prohibited. A hard cover must be installed on every hot tub/spa and it must be

locked at all times children are in care. In addition, a self-closing and locking device must be installed on the doors that lead directly to the hot tub/spa.

Q: My back yard is totally fenced because I have an inground pool. Do I need to do anything else?

A: You need to either designate a safe play area for children outside of the fenced back yard or fence in a separate play area in the back yard at least 400 square feet in size. Check to make sure the fence around your yard is at least 4 feet high. Is it free of any openings a child can get through? Can a child readily climb the fence or access the yard any other way? Make sure the lock you have on your gate cannot be opened by children. If there are any doors from your home leading into the fenced pool area, these doors must be equipped with locks that children cannot open and kept locked during day care hours. A door alarm system is advised. A pool alarm that alerts you to anything in the water is also a good idea.

Q: I want to use my inground pool for the day care children. Is this allowed?

A: Although this type of water activity for day care children is not recommended, if you meet certain criteria, it would be allowed. When you use a swimming pool (lake, pond, river) as part of your program, you will be expected to provide direct adult supervision to children at all times. This means:

- Never leave children in a water activity area without an adult caregiver or adult assistant caregiver.
- Pay attention to children at all times. Use the telephone for emergencies only.
- Be out of the water so you can see every child. If you have a second caregiver she can be in the water as long as an adult is out of the water



supervising.

- Have another assistant caregiver with the children who are not participating in the water activity.
- Make sure the ratio rule (R400.1803) is followed in the water area in addition to other areas where there are children.
- Limit the number of children in the water at any one time based on the ages of children, number of non-swimmers and special needs of individual children.

Besides providing direct supervision, you must also do the following:

- Check the water activity area for general safety.
- Have a CPR trained adult supervising children in the water activity area.
- Teach children rules for behavior in and around the water activity.
- Get written permission from the parents for children to participate.
- Have a telephone for emergency use available without leaving the water activity area, or if you are away from home participating in a water activity, know where a working telephone is located.
- Have a reach pole or alternative available.
- Use diving boards and water slides with caution.
- Use inflatable toys and rings for play only, not to replace supervision or emergency devices.
- Test water quality regularly in swimming pools and use chemicals according to the manufacturer's guidelines.
- Include in your overall serious accident or injury plan what you would do if a child is injured in the water and/or does not come up to the surface and/or looks like the child has drowned.
- Make sure the water activity area is safe and suitable for children. How deep is it? Is there a drop off?

Q: Are small wading pools allowed?

A: Although the use of wading pools in day care homes is not recommended, they are allowed under the following conditions:

- A CPR trained adult must be on site.
- Wading pools must be emptied after the last play period of the day or more often if they



become contaminated.

It is important to note that several children became seriously ill from E. coli bacteria after playing in a contaminated wading pool.

Q: If I don't use a wading pool or swimming pool, what can I do with children on a hot summer day when we want to cool off?

A: Hoses and sprinklers can be great fun. How about having plastic dishpans available for the children to fill with water from the hose and various empty plastic containers children can use to fill, pour, dump and float? Remember, children don't have to be in the water to have fun with water.

Everyone will have a fun, safe summer if you keep

The Top 5 Reasons a Sprinkler is Better Than a Pool

Reason #5: Sprinklers make your grass grow. Pools kill the grass underneath them.

Reason #4: You get more exercise running through a sprinkler than sitting in a pool.

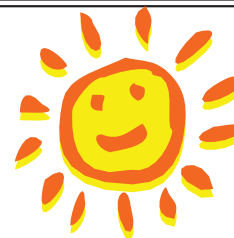
Reason #3: You usually don't pee in a sprinkler, and if you do, it doesn't get on everyone else.

Reason #2: You don't have to clean a sprinkler. There are no dead bugs floating in sprinklers.

And the #1 Reason that sprinklers are better than pools: Children can drown in pools, not in sprinklers.

Wet and Wild Summer Fun

Marilyn Lopes, Extension Specialist, Family Life Education
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University of Massachusetts



"PAINTING"

Give each child a small bucket or can with water in it and an old paintbrush. Children enjoy "painting" the house, steps, garage, fence, sidewalk, etc. using their own bucket and brush.

GARDEN SPRINKLER

Instead of playing in a pool, attach the garden hose to a sprinkler. Turn on the water and listen to the squeals of delight as the children run through the spray of water.

BALLOON CATCH

Fill small balloons with water, and use them to play a game of catch with the children.

WATER PLAY ACCESSORIES

Simple household items can make water play a lot of fun. See if you have any of these items for the children to play with:

muffin tins	sieve
measuring spoons	funnels
measuring cups	strainer
empty plastic bottles	sponges
empty squeeze bottles	corks

WET SAND

Wet some sand in a sandbox. Talk about the differences between the wet and dry sand. Have the children dig rivers, streams, and lakes in the sand, and fill them with water.

PING PONG BOATS

Use clean, empty margarine tubs for boats. Float the boats in a wading pool or dishpan. Have each child take turns trying to toss ping-pong balls into the boats.

SAILBOAT

Need:

clean styrofoam meat tray stapler
pipe cleaner
construction paper



To Do:

Have each child use crayons to decorate the styro-

foam meat tray. Stick the pipe cleaner through the center of the tray. Secure it by bending the end on the underside of the styrofoam tray. Cut a small diamond shape out of the construction paper. Fold the diamond in half to make a sail. Place the pipe cleaner in the fold of the sail and staple to hold it in place. Take the sailboat outside for a voyage in a wading pool or dishpan.

SINK OR FLOAT

Have each child gather a number of items from around the house (such as a paper clip, sponge, cork, plastic toys, marble, etc.). Take them outside to a wading pool, dishpan, or bucket of water to see which items sink or float.

Try some experiments with the children. Can you make something that sinks, float? Place a sinking object on a floating object. For example, place a marble on a sponge. What object holds the most things and still floats?

BOBBER

Need:

plastic container with tight fitting lid (such as a pill bottle)
piece of string (approx. 12" long)
glue

To Do:

Remove the lid from the plastic container. Place the end of the string inside the container. Glue the container's lid in place. Let glue dry.

Take the bobber to a wading pool, dishpan, or bucket of water. Place the bobber in the water. Pull the bobber under the water with the string. Let go of the string and watch the bobber BOB! ❖

Environmental To Do's for Young Children

Marilyn Lopes, Extension Specialist
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Not a day passes without mention of an environment-related issue. You can help youngsters develop an understanding of the environment and improve their critical-thinking skills by incorporating nature into early learning experiences.

What better way for children to develop a sense of respect for nature than to be immersed in environmental activities year-round? The following ideas for hiking activities should get you started.

To begin, identify a theme: Spring Is In the Air, Explore Your Playground, Where Are the Leaves?, Wintertime for Animals, Search for the Early Birds, etc. Once you establish a theme, take the children on a hike in a nearby wooded area, in a field, or on a nature trail. Visit the location several times during the year so that children may identify changes within the same setting over time.

Hikes are an excellent opportunity to develop young children's observation skills. For example, have children compare the shapes, forms, and conditions of trees several times each year. Observing trees with or without bark, leaves, flowers, or fruit each month helps children develop an awareness of the

cyclical processes of nature. Or mark tree shadows at different times during the year. Keep a record of the time, date, and length of the shadows and help the children compare the records.

Hikes can also enhance all kinds of sensory development. For example, let children identify different textures along the hike. Make rubbings of the various textures. Then, try duplicating the outdoor textures with materials at home. Children will soon be able to identify the specific characteristics of each texture.

Take time for children to listen quietly to the many sounds on the hike. Ask children to pantomime the noises they hear. Later, have them draw, sing, or write about their experiences on the outdoor hike. Expressing these sensory experiences helps children to share their understanding of the event. ❖

Reprinted with permission from the National Network for Child Care - NNCC, (1993). *Environmental To Do's For Young Children*. In M. Lopes (Ed.) *CareGiver News* (September, p. 1). Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Cooperative Extension.

When the Bee Stings

Roger Grates, Beekeeper



FACT: In the United States, more people die from bee or wasp stings than from snake bites.

Over 2,000 varieties of bees exist in the world. Honey bees will sting if they or their hive are threatened. People in our area are most likely to be stung by yellow jackets or wasps because of their attraction to soft drinks and foods humans consume. They are also attracted by cosmetics and perfumes.

The first typical reaction to a sting is an investigation of the afflicted area. If the stinger is still embedded in the skin, the second typical reaction is to pinch the stinger between the thumb and index finger to pull it out of the skin. This is the wrong technique. The correct method for removing the stinger is to scrape it off with a fingernail or other flat edged objects starting at the base of the stinger.

The reason the stinger should be scraped off is

that it is really a subassembly of the stinger, poison sac and muscles surrounding the poison sac. If the stinger is left embedded in the skin, the muscles surrounding the poison sac continue to contract for up to half an hour. If you pinch the stinger and poison sac subassembly to remove it, you are really injecting the venom. Remember, scrape the stinger off.

If the afflicted person starts to show an allergic reaction, get professional help immediately. The reaction may take the form of acute respiratory depression. The individual may turn blue. Temperature may elevate. Severe burning or stinging may take place some distance from the site of the sting. Should the person go into cardiac arrest (this can happen fast in extreme cases), CPR should be administered. ❖

Reprinted from Better Homes and Centers, Spring, 1989

Save Yourself Some Trouble

Judy Gaspar, Licensing Consultant
Kalamazoo County

Springtime brings flowers, showers, and bugs. Children in your care need protection from the bugs in your outdoor play area. Many providers have found that it is best to require the parents to provide the bug spray, rather than supplying it.

What are the advantages in having the parent rather than the provider supply the bug spray? This method will:



- ◆ Reduce the risk of allergic reactions to a product, since parents know their children's susceptibilities
- ◆ Maintain sanitary conditions by having a bottle for each child or each family, rather than sharing the product with all children
- ◆ Save money

Summertime brings hot weather, sunshine, and sunburn. What if a child is sunburned while in your care? A sunburned child could lead to an angry parent, an injured child, a doctor bill, a complaint, a loss of a customer, even skin cancer for the sunburned child.

What to do?

Again, some providers have found that requiring the parents to supply the sunscreen makes good sense. The risk of an allergic reaction is enough to justify your request.

What precautions can a provider take to protect children from the sun?

- ◆ Minimize sun exposure from approximately 10:00 am to 2:00 pm
- ◆ Use sun screen with both UV-A and UV-B protection
- ◆ Use sunhats or the new clothing products that have sun screen in them
- ◆ Keep children in the shade, if possible

Remember that the amount of sun that an infant or a child receives in younger years can correlate to skin cancer in later life.

Do sunscreen and bug spray require written parental permission? Yes, any thing that is given or applied to a child must have specific procedures and written records, according to the medication rule in the licensing requirements. The rule includes, but is not limited to:

- ◆ Prescription medications
- ◆ Over the counter medications and preparations
- ◆ Suntan lotion
- ◆ Bug spray
- ◆ Diaper ointment
- ◆ Vitamins

Written permission from the parent, the product labeled for a specific child, the use of safe storage, and written records of time and amount given or applied are all required.

Record keeping is easy with a printed document. You can download the Bureau's sample medication form off the Internet or you can devise your own method of record keeping.



What can you do in your own outdoor play area to provide some shade for the children?

- ◆ Keep the children on a covered porch, if one is available
- ◆ Install a canopy over the outdoor eating areas
- ◆ Install an awning or covering over the sand area
- ◆ Plant trees
- ◆ Position the slide so that the sun does not heat up the metal
- ◆ Use umbrellas with generous overhangs

Skin cancer protective behaviors

- Minimize exposure to the sun during peak hours (10 a.m. – 4 p.m.).
- Seek shade from the midday sun (10 a.m. – 4 p.m.).
- Wear clothing, hats, and sunglasses that protect the skin.
- Use a broad-spectrum (UV-A and UV-B protection) with a sun-protection factor equal to or greater than 15).
- Avoid sunlamps and tanning beds.

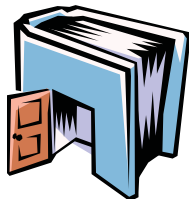
Let's Read to Our Children!

MCCM Editorial Committee

You have the ability to make a difference with the children you care for this summer. It doesn't take a lot of money or brand new equipment. All you have to do is spend some time each day reading to your children.

You may already know how important it is to read to young children. If you do, you are in good company. Governor Jennifer Granholm has been very active in promoting reading to children. "If we can find a way to read to every child for just one-half hour every day, it would create a revolutionary change in our educational system and in our communities."

"Early childhood reading is not a 'cause,' it's an active way to make an impact on our future," the governor said. "That simple half-hour act repeated over these five preschool years amounts to a full year of school."



In her recent State of the State Address, Governor Granholm announced Project Great Start, which will promote two initiatives – parent education and early childhood reading. "The research indicates that reading to infants and young children ensures great readers in kindergarten and first grade. If children fall behind in their reading in kindergarten, they become less and less motivated to read and learn."

Brain research shows that reading and other emergent literacy activities are very effective ways to stimulate brain development, from the earliest weeks of life. It is during the first three years of life that brain growth occurs most quickly and dramatically. Reading to infants and toddlers stimulates the brain to make new and stronger connections between the billions of neurons within the brain. Reading to older children helps to solidify these connections.

write the captions and read them aloud as you look at the book together. ❖

♦ Wells, Rosemary; Bunny Money

Good Books to Read to Infants

- ♦ Cole, Joanne; Pat-A-Cake and other Play Rhymes
- ♦ Hill, Eric; Spot at Home
- ♦ Intrater, Roberta Grobel; Baby Faces: Smile
- ♦ Manning, Priscilla; This Little Piggy
- ♦ Martin, Bill; Chicka Chicka Boom Boom and Polar Bear, Polar Bear, What do you hear?

Good Books to Read to Toddlers

- ♦ Brown, Margaret Wise; Goodnight Moon
- ♦ Carle, Eric; Very Hungry Caterpillar
- ♦ Crews, Donald; Freight Train
- ♦ Degen, Bruce; Jamberry
- ♦ Shaw, Nancy; Sheep in a Jeep



Good Books to Read to Pre-Schoolers

- ♦ Alborough, Jez; Watch Out! Big Bro's Coming
- ♦ Day, Alexander; Follow Carl!
- ♦ Dodd, Dayle Ann; Sing, Sophie!
- ♦ Gag, Wanda; Millions of Cats
- ♦ Numeroff, Laura Jaffe; If You Give a Mouse a Cookie

Books Kids Will Sit Still For

- ♦ Aker, Suzanne; What comes in 2's, 3's, and 4's.
- ♦ Alborough, Jez; Where's My Teddy?
- ♦ Bunting, Eve; Flower Garden
- ♦ Chapman, Cheryl; Pass the Fritters, Critters
- ♦ Fleming, Denise; Barnyard Banter
- ♦ Ford, Miela; Little Elephant

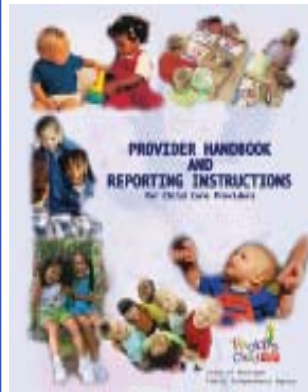


Books for Ages 4 to 8

- ♦ Lin, Grace; Kite Flying
- ♦ Campbell, Rod; Dear Zoo
- ♦ Catrow, David; We The Kids: The Preamble To The Constitution
- ♦ Golden Gelman, Rita; More Spaghetti, I Say!
- ♦ Kuklin, Susan; Hoops With Swoops



News From FIA



PROVIDER HANDBOOK AND REPORTING INSTRUCTIONS for Child Care Providers

The CDC Provider Handbook and Reporting Instructions (FIA Publication 230) has been updated to reflect current payment rates and schedules, application and reporting forms, income eligibility scale, and 4C resources. An initial distribution has been made to all active child care providers.

IF YOU HAVE NOT RECEIVED YOUR HANDBOOK, CALL (517) 373-0356.

Resources: Summer Fun

Consumer Product Safety Commission, www.cpsc.gov

American Society for Testing and Materials, www.astm.org

National Program for Playground Safety, www.uni.edu/playground

International Play Equipment Manufacturers Association, www.ipema.org

Caring for our Children, American Public Health Association and American Academy of Pediatrics, nrc.uchsc.edu

Miller, S., "Making the Most of Field Trips", Scholastic Early Childhood Today, May 2002.

Office for Young Children, Field Trip Guide, 2002.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, www.cdc.gov

The Skin Cancer Foundation, www.skincancer.org

American Academy of Dermatology, www.aad.org

Professional Development Opportunities

Annual Northern Michigan Child Development Conference
Saturday, October 11, 2003
Traverse City West High School
Contact Pam Ward at 231-941-7767 or 800-968-4428

Child Care Resources
Saturday, October 18, 2003
Kalamazoo Valley Community College
Call 800-343-3470 for information.



Consumer Product Safety Commission Infant/Child Product Recalls (not including toys)

- Hufco-Delaware Company and Evenflo Company Inc. Recall of Portable Wood Cribs
- Baby Trend Recall to Repair Infant Swings Sold at Toys R Us
- Oriental International Trading Company Recall of Baby Walkers
- Bikepro, Inc. Recall of Baby Walkers
- XL Machine Ltd. Recall of Playskool Toy Chests Sold at Target
- Dorel Juvenile Group Recall of Repair Infant Car Seats/Carriers
- Vermont Precision Woodworks Recall of Cribs
- Fisher-Price Recall for In-Home Repair of Infant Swings
- Childcraft Education Recall of Changing Table with Steps
- L.A. Baby Recall of Folding Little Wood Cribs
- LaJobi Industries Crib Recall
- Evenflo Recall to Repair Home Décor Swing™ Wooden Baby Gates
- Dorel Juvenile Group Cosco Playpen Recall
- Kolcraft LiteSport Stroller Recall
- Fisher-Price Recall of Portable Bassinets
- Peg Perego USA Recall of High Chairs
- Century Recall of Multi-Use Strollers
- Changing Tables Recalled by Child Craft Industries
- Highchairs Recalled by Graco
- Cribs Recall/Repair by Simmons
- “Ranger” Strollers Recalled by Kolcraft
- Century Infant Car Seat/Carrier Recall
- “Le Cradle” Bassinets Recalled by Kids Line
- Baby Walkers Recalled by Safety 1st
- Gerry® TrailTech™ Backpack Baby Carriers Recalled by Hufco-Delaware
- Tot Wheels® Entertainer® Infant Walkers Recalled by Graco
- Graco Recall of Infant Swings
- Infant Carriers Recalled by Evenflo & Hufco-Delaware
- Crate & Barrel Recall of Children’s Table
- Cosco Recall of Two Ways™ Tandem Strollers
- Regal + Lager Recall of “Baby Bjorn” Infant Carrier
- BRK Recall of First Alert True Fit Safety Gates
- Century Recall of Fold-N-Go® Care Centers
- NHTSA Recall of Evenflo On My Way Infant Car Seats/Carriers
- Graco Recall of Carriers and Carrier/Swing Seats
- MTS Products Recall of Infant Carriers
- BRK Recall of First Alert® True Fit Safety Gate
- Century Recall of Lil’ Napper Infant Swings
- Coaster Company of America Recall of Baby Cribs
- Cosco Recall to Repair Quiet Time™ Infant Swings
- Little Tikes Cozy Highback Swing Recall
- Baby Trend Crib/Playpen Recall

Details on these product recalls may be obtained on the
Consumer Product Safety Commission’s website:
www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/prerel/category/child.html

This publication provides topical information regarding young children who are cared for in licensed child care settings. We encourage child care providers to make this publication available to parents of children in care, or to provide them with the web address so they may receive their own copy. Issue 43 and beyond are available on the internet. This document is in the public domain and we encourage reprinting.

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Fun With Foods

Cantaloupe Cooler

- 1 c. cantaloupe chunks
- ¼ c. apple juice concentrate
- 1 c. milk

Mix together in blender. Makes a sweet foamy drink.

Chinese Chews

- 1 c. chocolate bits
- 1 c. butterscotch or peanut butter chips
- 1 c. chopped walnuts
- ¼ c. shredded coconut
- 3 ounces Chinese noodles

Melt the chips in a double boiler. Add nuts, coconut, and noodles. Drop on waxed paper by tablespoonfuls. Refrigerate for 2 hours or longer. Makes 2 dozen.

Fruit Salad

- 1 apple
- 1 orange, peeled
- 1 banana, peeled
- 1 c. seedless grapes
- 1 c. fresh or frozen berries
- 2 Tbsp. Chopped walnuts

Chop the apple, orange and banana into chunks. Mix all the ingredients together in a large bowl. Add the fruit dressing (recipe follows).

Fruit Salad Dressing

- ¼ c. cream cheese, softened
- ½ banana, sliced
- ½ c. orange juice concentrate

Mix all the ingredients together in a blender.



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